

CAPTA State Grant Application

Developed by: State of Tennessee's Department of Children's Services

A. Tennessee's Department of Children's Services (TDCS) focused on the following areas from the options enumerated in section 106(b)(A) through (14) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act for improvement in FY 2011:

1. Improving the intake, assessment, screening and investigation of reports of abuse and neglect
2. Creating and improving the use of multidisciplinary teams and interagency, intra-agency, interstate and intrastate protocols to enhance investigations; and improving legal preparation and representation, including (i) procedures for appealing and responding to appeals of substantiated reports of child abuse or neglect; and (ii) provisions for the appointment of an individual appointed to represent a child in judicial proceedings
3. Improving the case management, including ongoing case monitoring and delivery of services and treatment provided to children and their families
4. Enhancing the general child protective system by developing, improving and implementing risk and safety assessment tools and protocols, including the use of differential response
5. Developing and updating systems of technology that support the program and track reports of child abuse and neglect from intake through final disposition and allow interstate and intrastate information exchange
6. Developing, strengthening and facilitating training, including (A) training regarding research-based strategies, including the use of differential response, to promote collaboration with the families; (B) training regarding the legal duties of such individuals; (C) personal safety training for caseworkers; and (C) training in early childhood, child and adolescent development
7. Improving the skills, qualifications and availability of individuals providing services to children and families, and the supervisors of such individuals, through the child protection system, including improvements in the recruitment and retention of caseworkers

8. Developing, facilitating the use of and implementing research-based strategies and training protocols for individuals mandated to report child abuse and neglect
9. Developing, implementing or operating programs to assist in obtaining or coordinating necessary services for families of disabled infants with life-threatening conditions, including (A) existing social and health services; (B) financial assistance; (C) services necessary to facilitate adoptive placement of any such infants who have been relinquished for adoption; and (D) the use of differential response in preventing child abuse and neglect
10. Developing and delivering information to improve public education relating to the role and responsibilities of the child protection system and the nature and basis for reporting suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect, including the use of differential response
11. Supporting and enhancing interagency collaboration between the child protection system and the juvenile justice system for improved delivery of services and treatment, including methods for continuity of treatment plan and services as children transition between systems

B. Summary of Accomplishments FY 2011

The following accomplishments provide an outline of Tennessee's activities completed with CAPTA grant funding for FY 2011 (section 106(b)(1)(C)(ii)):

1. **Improving the intake, assessment, screening and investigation of reports of abuse and neglect**
 - Since its statewide implementation in 2005, Central Intake has proven to be a consistent measure for receiving, screening, prioritizing and dispatching reports alleging abuse and neglect. As a response to the Department's partners in Education, a dedicated phone line to Central Intake was implemented in August 2011.
 - A Child Sexual Abuse curriculum was created (with both online and classroom components) to target audiences that included child welfare workers. Topics covered understanding child sexual abuse, reporting and recognizing child sexual abuse, and handling disclosures and recantations.
 - OCS continued to utilize University of Tennessee's Social Work Office of Research and Public Service's (SWORPS) Investigative Support Services by use of polygraph tests, translator services, medical consultation and alcohol and drug testing.
 - OCS continues to provide requested resources to staff to aid in their investigative efforts. Office of Information Services is currently identifying staff to receive updated computers and other forms of technology that will

- offer support to their daily functioning.
 - Greater presence and response by OCS Central Office staff has helped to improve the working relationship between administrative and regional staff. This improvement affords opportunities to gain insight from regional staff on administrative developments that impact their work.
2. **Creating and improving the use of multidisciplinary teams and interagency, intra-agency, interstate and intrastate protocols to enhance investigations; and improving legal preparation and representation, including (i) procedures for appealing and responding to appeals of substantiated reports of child abuse or neglect; and (ii) provisions for the appointment of an individual appointed to represent a child in judicial proceedings**
- OCS continues to support the growth of multidisciplinary teaming through consultations, training and technical assistance to the Child Advocacy Centers, the Child Protective Investigative Teams (CPIT) and the child forensic interviewers.
 - OCS maintains representation on the state Child Fatality Review Team to provide appropriate insight into departmental policies, procedures or other interests. OCS continues its collaboration with state health officials to identify and incorporate preventive programs based upon findings of the Child Fatality Review Team.
 - Training and technical assistance are provided for the Citizen Review Panels (CRPs) to develop and strengthen the panels' roles. CRPs continue to operate in four regions across the state: Northwest, Shelby, Tennessee Valley and Mid-Cumberland (Montgomery)
 - TDCS continued a contract with the University of Tennessee SWORPS to coordinate, facilitate and provide technical assistance to the CRPs in order to meet federal requirements.
 - OCS has staff whose primary role is to review cases of individuals that are seeking an appeal of a substantiated report that identified them as a perpetrator. The completion of the reviews also leads to training opportunities, which allows regional staff to receive feedback to improve the documentation of investigative events and activities.
 - Regions continue to strengthen the border agreements between Virginia and Georgia to improve cooperation and collaboration amongst bordering states, which leads to better investigative outcomes for children and families.
3. **Improving the case management, including ongoing case monitoring and delivery of services and treatment provided to children and their families**
- OCS incorporated the use of the Quality Review Tool (QRT) in case conferences/administrative reviews with Team Leaders and caseworkers. Team Leaders were able to support solid, quality casework while promoting ongoing professional development. After statewide implementation of

the tool, several reports from regional staff indicated needs to revise tool. Revisions are currently being made and a supporting video has been completed to assist team leaders to effectively use the tool to drive better quality casework.

- OCS staff continues to provide assistance to regions for case direction and closures. OCS staff also conducted case reviews in efforts to reduce caseload counts and to provide feedback to regional staff to promote better quality of service delivery to families.
4. **Enhancing the general child protective system by developing, improving and implementing risk and safety assessment tools and protocols, including the use of differential response**
- TDCS continues to ensure the quality and continuity of family assessments and conducts child abuse investigations without causing secondary trauma to the alleged victims by using the Family Advocacy and Support Tool (FAST) to assess the strengths and needs for non-custodial children and families and to better identify service needs.
 - OCS staff is reviewing and researching assessment tools and processes to in efforts to improve the assessment process and the identification of services and resources in Tennessee.
 - OCS staff is working with child welfare information system staff to identify areas of needs and improvements of the functionality and accessibility of assessment tools, forms, and information in TFACTS (Tennessee Family and Tracking System).
 - Tennessee is a differential response state, and has been functioning under the reform since 2005. OCS reviews cases and provides training and assistance to regional staff as it relates to the completion of the SDM Safety assessment, the FAST, and the FFA (Family Functional Assessment). OCS is currently reviewing the effectiveness of the assessment tools performed on Non-Custodial (In-Home) cases.
5. **Developing and updating systems of technology that support the program and track reports of child abuse and neglect from intake through final disposition and allow interstate and intrastate information exchange**
- OCS continues to collect data from TFACTS to analyze policy compliance, workload status and identify areas for improvement.
 - Reports of overdue cases are generated daily and compiled in a shared online data form for analysis purposes. Strategies for reducing the number of overdue cases continue to be discussed in monthly Regional Administrator meetings as well as monthly CPS workgroup polycom conferences with regional CPS Team Leaders and Team Coordinators. Staff has also received tutorials to help them to better navigate the online data, which creates more accountability and improved tracking at the regional level.

- TFACTS extracts severe abuse referrals from Central Intake and places these referrals into the National Children's Alliance Technology Track Reaching All Kids (NCAtrak), which distributes the information to the appropriate CACs in the judicial districts for follow up and tracking.
6. **Developing, strengthening and facilitating training, including (A) training regarding research-based strategies, including the use of differential response, to promote collaboration with the families; (B) training regarding the legal duties of such individuals; (C) personal safety training for caseworkers; and (C) training in early childhood, child and adolescent development**
- The Department is currently exploring opportunities to build internal capacity to enhance the interviewing skills of staff that have been trained as Forensic Interviewers.
 - The CAC's developed "Talking to Kids," a curriculum designed specifically for frontline professionals to help build and strengthen skills to appropriately gather information from children regarding abuse or neglect once a disclosure or allegation of maltreatment is reported.
 - A computer based learning and learning circle facilitated training was developed in collaboration with DCS, the Centers for Excellence, TN Chapter of CAC's, mental health providers, and the TCCW (Tennessee Center for Child Welfare), for frontline investigators, clinicians, and educators, to address the identification and treatment needs of children with sexual behavior problems.
 - OCS staff worked with TCCW to improve pre-service and in-service training available to DCS staff. The improvements are expected to enhance the skills of workers in areas that include Multiple Response, personal safety training for caseworkers, and collaborations with families and partners.
 - TCCW in collaboration with DCS developed "Understanding Sexual Behaviors in Children" which was developed to assist staff in identifying normal and problematic behaviors of early childhood, child and adolescent development.
7. **Improving the skills, qualifications and availability of individuals providing services to children and families, and the supervisors of such individuals, through the child protection system, including improvements in the recruitment and retention of caseworkers**
- Wicklander-Zuwlaski Child Abuse Interrogation Techniques training Program continues to provide frontline staff with learning opportunities in the areas of investigative interviewing and interrogation of alleged perpetrators in reports of child sexual abuse and child physical abuse. During FY 2011, approximately 137 TDCS staff will have attended and successfully completed the training. Since the start of the two, five contracts, 1140 DCS staff have

- received this training.
 - TDCS continues to offer the stipend program which provides financial assistance to current employees interested in pursuing a graduate degree in Social Work.
 - OCS continues to support the attendance of local and state agencies at statewide conferences, specifically the annual “Connecting for Children’s Justice” conference which focuses on strengthening, promoting and enhancing the understanding and response to child maltreatment.
8. **Developing, facilitating the use of and implementing research-based strategies and training protocols for individuals mandated to report child abuse and neglect**
- OCS continued its collaboration with University of Tennessee SWORPS to produce online curricula focusing on the role and responsibilities of the child protection system and reporting suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect.
 - The Education Committee of the Children’s Justice Task Force updated the child abuse mandatory reporting computer-based training to reflect the Multiple Response System (MRS) statute and other changes in practices and procedures.
 - OCS provided training to the Department of Human Services administrative staff and staff of the Center for Excellence on mandated reporting of child abuse and neglect.
9. **Developing, implementing or operating programs to assist in obtaining or coordinating necessary services for families of disabled infants with life-threatening conditions, including (A) existing social and health services; (B) financial assistance; (C) services necessary to facilitate adoptive placement of any such infants who have been relinquished for adoption; and (D) the use of differential response in preventing child abuse and neglect**
- TDCS continues to safeguard and enhance the welfare of children while preserving family life by using the Multiple Response System (MRS). MRS has proven that if implemented properly, the needs of the children and their families are more appropriately met.
 - Recommendations from the Second Look Commission, a statutorily mandated committee created to review and provide recommendations to the General Assembly regarding the investigation of child abuse cases, are being reviewed by the Joint Task Force for inclusion into appropriate committee assignments. Vulnerable populations are often the focus of the reviews.
 - The OCS fatality review team, comprised of Child Safety, a Medical Director, a Nurse, and representatives from Internal Affairs, Special Investigations, Continuous Quality Improvement, and Juvenile Justice, review the specifics of the death or near death cases, and directs special attention on cases that

- involve infants and children with life threatening conditions.
- Currently, we are collaborating with Tennessee Department of Health to more carefully identify and describe which populations are at the greatest risk of maltreatment.
- The OCS has developed an initiative, In Home Tennessee, to improve the quality of services rendered by DCS and service providers to children and families. This initiative is supported by a needs assessment process that actually reviews the services accessible to the children and families.

10. Developing and delivering information to improve public education relating to the role and responsibilities of the child protection system and the nature and basis for reporting suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect, including the use of differential response

- OCS staff continues to honor requests from the community to conduct presentations on both child safety and child fatalities. To date, presentations have been given to the Department of Health, School Personnel across the state, University of Tennessee sponsored health fair, and Cumberland Associates.
- OCS, in conjunction with the Shelby County CRP, have created a Memorandum of Understanding with the Memphis school system in an effort to coordinate protocol for reporting suspected child abuse and neglect.
- The Tennessee Chapter of CAC's in conjunction with the TCCW developed a 14-minute DVD for the Child Protective Investigative Teams (CPITs) to include a demonstration of a team case presentation and review of information needed by prosecutors to prosecute a case of severe child abuse. This DVD was distributed to all state child welfare regional administrators and CACs for training use with the local CPIT.

11. Supporting and enhancing interagency collaboration between the child protection system and the juvenile justice system for improved delivery of services and treatment, including methods for continuity of treatment plan and services as children transition between systems

- OCS continues to collaborate with public health agencies, education agencies and other community-based programs to address health needs, including the mental health needs of children identified as abused or neglected.
- The development of practices, trainings and protocols for Non-Custodial (In-Home) case workers are tailored to meet the training needs of all staff, which includes Juvenile Justice staff.

C. Summary of Activities to be implemented with CAPTA state grant funds and any changes in activities for FY 2012

Tennessee's Child Protective Services Program will continue to focus on the following 7 of the 14 program areas for FY 2012:

1. Improving the intake, assessment, screening and investigation of reports of abuse and neglect
2. Improving the case management, including ongoing case monitoring and delivery of services and treatment provided to children and their families
3. Enhancing the general child protective system by developing, improving and implementing risk and safety assessment tools and protocols, including the use of differential response
4. Developing, strengthening and facilitating training, including (A) training regarding research-based strategies, including the use of differential response, to promote collaboration with the families; (B) training regarding the legal duties of such individuals; (C) personal safety training for caseworkers; and (C) training in early childhood, child and adolescent development
5. Improving the skills, qualifications and availability of individuals providing services to children and families, and the supervisors of such individuals, through the child protection system, including improvements in the recruitment and retention of caseworkers
6. Developing and delivering information to improve public education relating to the role and responsibilities of the child protection system and the nature and basis for reporting suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect, including the use of differential response
7. Supporting and enhancing interagency collaboration between the child protection system and the juvenile justice system for improved delivery of services and treatment, including methods for continuity of treatment plan and services as children transition between systems

D. Description of the services and training to be provided under the CAPTA State Program Grant as required by section 106(b)(2)(D)

Tennessee's estimated CAPTA allocation of \$520,018 will be used to fund the following activities which include the services and training to be provided under CAPTA section 106(b)(2)(D):

- Continued provision of Child Abuse Interrogation Techniques training to CPS/OCS staff in order to improve competencies in the areas of investigative interviewing and interrogation of suspects (alleged perpetrators) in reports of child sexual abuse and child physical abuse
- Continued provision of guidance and assistance to CPS/OCS staff on effective utilization of the assessment process and investigation techniques through the In-Home Tennessee Initiative.
- Funding for the acquisition of educational materials, drug screens, digital cameras, books, laptops, videos, brochures and other resources to meet regional needs.

- Funding of a contractual agent to provide additional services necessary to assist in completion of child protective services, i.e. polygraphs, for perpetrator or victim, case file review and consultation services, drug and alcohol assessments and psychosexual evaluations.
- Continued support to the Citizen Review Panels as mandated by law.
- Funding and support to attend CAPTA grantee's meetings and other gatherings that require state representation.
- Continued provision of training opportunities for Non Custodial (In Home) staff on engagement techniques to promote collaboration with the families to better meet their needs, particularly as it pertains to the decision making process through the Multiple Response System.
- Provision of technical assistance by national and local experts to improve Community Advisory Boards functioning and membership.
- Establishment of a medical consultation network for use by CPS staff to obtain a physician's medical opinion regarding child abuse and neglect cases. The physician(s) should be experienced in identifying child maltreatment, and providing information in a way that supports CPS investigations and decision making.
- Continued provision of consultation, training and technical assistance to the Child Advocacy Centers, Child Protective Investigation Teams and Forensic Interviewers.
- Establishment of an Advanced Forensic Interview training to support and improve the interviewing skills and techniques of DCS staff currently trained as forensic interviewers.
- Continue support to staff to promote compliance of Policy 1.21 as it pertains to DCS' coordination and cooperation with communities, governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations. DCS shall solicit participation, involvement, resources and referral linkages from ethnic and community-based providers for cultural and linguistic services, in a coordinated effort to improve programs, services, activities and operations provided to children and families within the State of Tennessee.
- Continued provision of a variety of supports to promote compliance to DCS Policies in Chapter 14 as it relates to the Multiple Response System. The Department of Children Services working with other public agencies, or community-based private agencies, which may include faith-based organizations shall offer needed services to children and families for meeting the needs of the family as appropriate.
- Provision of Multiple Response System and In Home Tennessee (new initiative) education and training to community partners, schools, daycares and other public entities as deemed necessary and upon request.
- Establishment of master and regional coaches to support staff in applying new skills and knowledge through practice enhancement sessions, supervision, and day to day interactions. These activities are designed to serve as a model to staff for family centered behaviors.

E. CAPTA Child Abuse and Neglect Estimated Expenses Federal Grant Year 2011-2010

1. Technical Assistance & Training to CPS Frontline Staff and Supervisors	120,000
2. Wicklander-Zuwlaski Child Abuse Interrogation Techniques	64,000
3. Investigative Interviewing Techniques	20,000
4. Travel for Training, Annual CAPTA Conference CPS Program Staff	11,000
5. Services to Facilitate the Citizen Review Panel	55,000
6. Medical Consultation Services	100,000
7. Establishment of Coaches for Regional Staff 100,000	
8. Advanced Forensic Interview Training & Support 50,018	
Total	\$520,018

F. Changes in State Law

There were no changes in state law that would affect eligibility for CAPTA funds.

G. Citizen Review Panel Reports

H. Description of the Requirement for Criminal Background Check of Foster Parents

Tennessee's DCS has been a dual approval state for the past several years and intends to continue this practice. In Tennessee, a resource parent is any one who is paid to foster a child in DCS custody, paid to care for a relative child in DCS custody, or who has adopted a child who has been in DCS custody. These parents each must meet the same criteria as outline in the attached policy including criminal background checks. For additional information, please see DCS policies [16.20](#) and [16.4](#).

I. Information on Child Protection Services Workforce

Basic qualifications, education and training requirements established by the State for child protective service professionals:

- Graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree and experience equivalent to one year of full-time professional work providing child welfare services including, but not limited to, one or a combination of the following: social, psychological, correctional counseling or case management; volunteer services coordination for a children's service program; and/or juvenile classification coordination. An applicant with no experience may be hired at the entry level under the condition of a longer probationary period of one year, at which time the employee may be eligible for advancement.
- Child protective service professionals must complete 40 training hours per fiscal year.
- There is currently no demographic information available due to the limited information obtained on state applications pertaining to race and gender.

Information on caseload or workload requirements for such personnel, including requirements for average number and maximum number of cases per child protective service worker and supervisor (section 106(d)(10)):

- During the 2010-2011 fiscal year, a total of 839 CPS positions were filled. This total includes Assessment and Investigation workers, Family Crisis Intervention and Prevention workers, clerical staff, Assessment and Investigation supervisors, Resource Linkage staff and CPS "blended" (Assessment, Investigation, and FCIP supervisors) supervision. Regionally, Davidson filled 84 positions, Knox 56, TN Valley 92, Shelby 117, Mid-Cumberland 107, Upper Cumberland 47, East 49, Smoky Mountain 44, Northeast 75, South Central 64, Southwest 58, and Northwest 37.
- Although caseload and workloads for CPS workers vary relative to the number of vacant positions, **37,685 Assessment/Multiple Response System cases and 24,343 Investigation cases** were initiated during fiscal year 2010-2011.
- During fiscal year 2010-2011, 416 CPS workers were responsible for Assessment cases and 221 workers were responsible for Investigation cases. All CPS Intakes are handled by our Central Intake staff which is housed at our Central Intake 24-hour call center. Central Intake workers are not assigned cases.

J. Juvenile Justice Transfers

250 children under the care of TDCS' child protection system were transferred into the custody of the State juvenile justice system in Federal FY 2012. This information is reported by the TDCS' Juvenile Justice Division.

K. State Liaison Information

To facilitate ongoing communication between the Children's Bureau and Tennessee on issues relating to CAPTA and child abuse and neglect, please find the contact information for the CAPTA coordinator, or State Liaison Officer, below:

Carla Aaron, Office of Child Safety Executive Director
436 Sixth Avenue North
Cordell Hull Building, 8th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243
Email: Carla.Aaron@tn.gov

Or,

Marjahna Hart, Office of Child Safety Program Director
436 Sixth Avenue North
Cordell Hull Building, 8th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243
Email: Marjahna.Hart@tn.gov

Attachment 1

Citizen Review Panel Concerns and Recommendations:

DCS has recently received the Citizens Review Panel's Annual Report (see attached) as well as their concerns and recommendations (noted below).

Concern 1: Shelby County CRP members have expressed concern about the response to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) document submitted to TDCS more than a year ago for approval. The MOU was developed to promote a plan for coordination of services for children and youth safety and to ensure they receive adequate interagency supports.

Recommendation 1: Approve and implement the MOU document developed by the Shelby County CRP, which establishes a framework of collaboration and parties responsibilities between the local TDCS office and Memphis City/Shelby County Schools.

Concern 2: Protecting children from abuse and neglect is a community responsibility, and schools provide a high number of reports of child abuse/neglect to the state. Schools are frequently concerned with what happens next after they report, what to do if a child is afraid to go home, changes in state and local laws. By providing schools with regular training TDCS can help to ease some of their confusion and fears.

Recommendation 2: Educate secondary schools on the child abuse mandatory reporting as well as address their concerns about education neglect.